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REPORT
OF THE
BOARD OF
SWAMP LAND COMMISSIONERS,

TO THE
Governor of Arkansas.

SEPTEMBER 24, 1856.

LITTLE ROCK.
PRINTED AT THE TRUE DEMOCRAT OFFICE.
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REPORT
OF THE BOARD OF
SWAMP LAND COMMISSIONERS.

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF
SWAMP LAND COMMISSIONERS,
Little Rock, Sept., 24th, 1856.

To His Excellency, **ELLAS N. CONWAY,**

Governor of the State of Arkansas—

SIR: The Swamp Land Commissioners for the State of Arkansas have the honor to submit, herewith, their report of the proceedings of the Board, for the past two years, which the law requires they should make on or before the first Monday in October.

On the 3d day of April, 1855, Daniel E. Williams and James H. Hobbs, two of the present Board of Commissioners, convened at the office in the city of Helena, and organized as required by law, and having remained in session at that place a sufficient length of time to transact all business to the Board presented, removed the domicil of the Board to the city of Little Rock; believing the last named place to be the most convenient to all persons desiring scrip, or information in relation to swamp and overflowed lands.

The Board, having concluded to remove said swamp land office to the city of Little Rock, adopted the following order:

“It is ordered that the office of the Board of Swamp Land Commissioners be removed and established at the city of Little Rock, and that all papers, records, plats, diagrams, and all other papers pertaining to said office, together with the scrip which may have been deposited in said office, be sent to said office hereby established and removed to the said city of Little Rock, and that William E. Butts, esq., be authorized to sell or dispose of all the furniture belonging to the office in the city of Helena, with the

exception of the safe, which is to be sent to the office at Little Rock, the first convenient opportunity."

Upon the adoption of the above order, the Board adjourned to meet in the city of Little Rock, on Monday the 23d day of April, 1855, at which time said Board convened at their office, selected James M. Brown, esq., secretary, appointed the required number of locating agents, and by an order, discontinued all former agents, sub-commissioners and engineers, believing that the swamp land fund had been greatly prejudiced by the appointment of too many sub-officers, some of whom, the Board were induced to believe, had been unfaithful, and others utterly incompetent to discharge the duties of their respective offices; and, that by so doing the State would save a large amount which said officers were constantly receiving.

The State was then divided for the purpose of charging each Swamp Land Commissioner with the personal supervision of his district—Daniel E. Williams taking the immediate charge and control of the location of levees, drains, the appointment of agents, and other matter necessary and proper to the reclamation of the swamp and overflowed lands, in the following counties, to wit: Ashley, Bradley, Calhoun, Clark, Columbia, Chicot, Dallas, Desha, Drew, Hempstead, Lafayette, Montgomery, Ouachita, Pike, Polk, Sevier, Scott and Union.

C. F. M. Noland, took charge and control of the counties of Arkansas, Carroll, Conway, Fulton, Hot Spring, Izard, Independence, Jefferson, Marion, Pulaski, Pope, Prairie, Perry, Randolph, Saline, Searcy, White and Van Buren.

James H. Hobbs, the counties of Benton, Crawford, Crittenden, Franklin, Green, Johnson, Jackson, Lawrence, Mississippi, Madison, Monroe, Newton, Phillips, Poinsett, St. Francis, Sebastian, Yell and Washington.

After the State was districted, as above set forth, the Commissioners being advised from authentic and reliable sources that in many, if not in all the counties, there still remained many swamp and overflowed lands that had never been reported by the proper officers as such, deemed it their duty to obtain the services of good responsible and competent persons to go forward into the field and select such lands as speedily as possible, that they might be reported to the proper department at Washington city, for confirmation, and to effect that object the Commissioners, without delay, appointed in all the counties in which

such lands were situate, locating agents, with proper instructions.

When the present Board of Commissioners entered upon the discharge of their duties, they found that near 600,000 acres of land had been, before that time, reported by agents as swamp and overflowed lands, which had not been confirmed to the State, because said agents had not complied with the instructions of the Surveyor General.

The Commissioners at once caused to be made out true and correct lists of all of said lands and transmitted them to the agents in the different counties where such lands are situate. Most of said lands, which were found to be of the character contemplated in the act of 28th Sept., 1850, have been re-examined and properly returned to this office as swamp or overflowed, and transmitted to your Excellency.

At the first meeting of the present Board in the city of Little Rock, the Board appointed one engineer for each of the districts, believing that it would be absolutely impossible for a less number to attend to the onerous, burthensome and responsible duties confided to, and imposed on them. Besides, it was believed to be an act of economy to have an engineer for each district and thereby save to the State the large amounts heretofore annually paid to sub-commissioners who would pretend to do the work which the Board now requires at the hands of their respective engineers.

The second section of an act concerning swamp and overflowed lands, approved 22d January, 1855, required that no engineer should enter upon the discharge of his duties as such, without first having executed bond, payable to the State, with ample security for the faithful performance of his duty, and to carry out the requirements of said act, the Board passed an ordinance requiring each engineer to give bond as aforesaid in the sum of \$30,000, which bonds said engineers, severally, executed and the same are now on file in the office of the secretary of State.

Under the first section of the above entitled act, the Commissioners proceeded to make a personal inspection of levees, etc., and found in many places that the levees heretofore constructed are deficient in height and base, and also, frequently located too near the caving banks of the river, and in many places the location of levees have been made, following the meanderings of the rivers when they should have been, in the judgment of this

Board, placed at a greater distance from the river, and upon a more direct route, thereby saving large amounts of money to the swamp land fund.

The Commissioners find that some of the old levees had been constructed, in part, with logs, brush, wood, etc., which had been covered by throwing dirt upon the same for the purpose of concealment, and that levees so built, will, sooner or later, settle so much from the decay of such brush, etc., that they will be too low to resist the high floods of water so usual in the Mississippi river.

The engineer, McSheehy, employed by the old Board, from the best information we have been able to obtain, practiced many frauds upon the State, by measuring and receiving levees built as before stated, and reporting them to the Board for allowance.

The Commissioners are much indebted to the present engineers for the manner in which they have discharged their duties, and especially for their examination of levees, and their rejection of all work not done in good faith and according to the laws and ordinances of this State in reference to swamp lands.

In many places on the large rivers the citizens of the different counties are using the levees for roads, and from personal examination, we know that such things should be prohibited; for, in a short time after they are so used they wear down below high water mark, and are in danger of being swept away by high floods.

If levees belonging to the State are to be used for public roads, after so much money has been expended to build them, it is nothing but just that they should be kept up as other roads.

The Commissioners would further state that owing to the depreciation of scrip, they have been unable to have all the gaps along the Mississippi and Arkansas rivers completed; but at the same time, the Commissioners are much gratified to state to your Excellency that the work has been steadily progressing, and if the fund is only properly applied, must be completed in a comparatively short time.

Even if the gaps were all filled up, it would be impossible for the Commissioners to report how many lands have been reclaimed, for this fact could only be ascertained by an actual examination of all the swamp lands in the State. A vast amount of lands, however, have been reclaimed by the construction of levees and cutting ditches, and it is the opinion of this Board

that millions of acres of swamp lands which were, before the magnificent grant of the 28th September, 1850, regarded as worthless, will be thoroughly reclaimed, and become a source of great revenue to the State.

For the condition of the levees on the Arkansas and Mississippi rivers in Desha and Chicot counties, reference is made to the report of G. W. Hughes, esq., swamp land engineer, herewith, which was accompanied with a large topographical map, and profile of the levees.

Reference is also made to the report of D. Dickson, esq., swamp land engineer, which was accompanied also with a map, for the condition of the levees on the Arkansas river, above Chicot county. The map, etc., of Davis Thompson, esq., of the levee on the Mississippi river above Chicot county, is expected to be completed in a short time.

Statement A of this report shows the amount of levee work reported before the Board for allowance—the amount at 15, 20 and 25 cents per cubic yard—the amount allowed therefor, in dollars and cents—the name of the party to whom allowed, with the date of the allowance. Total amount, \$300,358 89.

Statement B shows the amount allowed for ditching and draining, the amount claimed for commissioner's salary, sub-commissioner's, engineers' and other incidental claims upon the swamp land fund and the total amount allowed therefor, \$62,208 62.

RECAPITULATION.

Amount of Scrip issued by the Board,	\$ 370,760 00
allowed by new Board and certified	
as per report in 1853-4	944,563 28
allowed and certified in Oct., 1854,	
subsequent to report,	44,979 63
allowed and certified by new Board	
in 1855-6.	362,567 51
Total,	\$1,722,870 42

An exhibit of the amount of swamp and overflowed lands selected for the State of Arkansas, showing the amount of said selections, that have been confirmed, and the amount patented.

Total amount selected heretofore,	8,465,542 63	Acres.
do do do by present B'rd Est.,	1,049,076 00	do

9,514,618 63

Total amount confirmed to the State, 5,920,024 94 acres.

Total amount patented to the State, 1,367,602 82 acres.

The Board have held their regular meetings quarterly at Little Rock, and audited all claims for levee work, ditching or draining and other incidental claims on the swamp land fund, and have certified all claims that were allowed by them to the Auditor. Claims for levee and other work have been brought before the Board by the proper engineers, and allowed upon the measurements and estimates reported by them, together with their certificate that the work reported is in all respects constructed in accordance with the requirements of the Board.

Respectfully submitted by

Your obedient servants,

DAN'L E. WILLIAMS,

JAMES H. HOBBS,

JAMES M. BROWN,

Swamp Land Commissioners.

ABSTRACT A—No. 1.

Date of Allowance.	To whom allowed.	No. of cubic yards of Levee work received.	Amount allowed for levee work at 15, 20 and 25 cents per cubic yard			No. of certificate to the Auditor.	Total amount allowed and certified.		REMARKS.
			at 15 cents.	20 cents.	25 cents.		Dollars	Cts.	
April 2, 1855..	Jilson P Johnson.....	2400 .....	.....	\$480 00	.....	553	.....	480 00	
do 2, do ..	Isaac H Hilliard.....	56284	\$1071 45	9848 20	.....	554	.....	10919 65	
do 2, do ..	Nathan Ross.....	6223	933 45	.....	.....	555	.....	933 45	
	George W Polk.....	8798	1318 93	.....	.....	556	.....	1318 95	
	Nathan Trotter.....	1398	209 70	.....	.....	557	.....	209 70	
	Lycurgus L Johnson....	8792	1255 20	84 80	.....	558	.....	1340	
	Isaac H Hilliard.....	2279 .....	.....	455 80	.....	559	.....	455 80	
	Lycurgus L Johnson....	19535 .....	.....	3907 ..	.....	560	.....	3907	
	Benj P Gaines.....	1802 .....	.....	360 40	.....	561	.....	363 40	
	same.....	9292	1393 80	.....	.....	562	.....	1393 80	
	Anthony H Davis.....	22742 .....	.....	4548 40	.....	563	.....	4548 40	
	E Worthington, A H } Davis & others.....	8383 17-100 .....	.....	1676 60	.....	564	.....	1676 60	
	John P Walworth.....	8229 02-100	1234 35	.....	.....	565	.....	1234 35	
	Leland P Craig.....	7427 12-100	1114 05	.....	.....	566	.....	1114 05	
	Charles W Campbell....	19667 83-100	1026 ..	25 75	.....	567	.....	3601 40	
	same.....	9378 02-000	1406 70	.....	.....	568	.....	1406 70	
	same.....	21197 .....	.....	4239 40	.....	570	.....	4239 40	
	Jilson P Johnson.....	83396 .....	.....	16679 36	.....	571	.....	16679 36	
	Patrick C O'Kelley.....	74612 79-100 .....	.....	14922 55	.....	572	.....	14922 55	
	T B Flournoy.....	18538 .....	.....	3707 60	.....	573	.....	3707 60	
	Eben Hollenbeck.....	10435 05-109 .....	.....	2087 10	.....	574	.....	2087 10	
	Craig & Ross.....	12600 59-100 .....	.....	2520 12	.....	575	.....	2520 12	
	S J Brandenburg.....	45848 85-100 .....	.....	9169 77	.....	576	.....	9169 77	
	H F Walworth.....	27848	4177 27	.....	.....	577	.....	4177 27	
	James B Miles.....	10577	1586 55	.....	.....	580	.....	1586 55	
	Square W D Chase.....	6717 55-100 .....	.....	1466 39	.....	581	.....	1466 39	
April 2d, 1855	H F Walworth.....	62393	2697 61	9541 80	.....	582 & 3	.....	2239 41	
	same.....	627 1/2	94 22	.....	.....	585	.....	94 22	
do do	William Gardner.....	1638 68-100	253 80	.....	.....	586	.....	253 80	
	Richard Powers.....	2628 63-100 .....	.....	527 72	.....	587	.....	527 72	
	Thomas Fletcher.....	8616 14-100 .....	.....	723 24	.....	588	.....	723 23	

	William Nichols.....	21729		4845 94	589	4845 94
	B S Johnson.....	2624 90-100	893	590	893 78	
	N. C. Coose.... 9.....	7953 28-100	—	591	1590 25	
	A L Burrow.....	4924	788 67	592	788 61	
	Jeremiah McLain.....	2908		593	580 60	
	Samuel Terry.....	2101 85-100		594	420 08	
	E C Morton.....	7641	591 90	595	1331 05	
	Zachariah Riggs.....	1115 40-100		599	223 08	
	Jno. A Jordan, assignee..	4337	650 55	600	650 55	
	 same.....	6736		601	1347 30	
	W J Floyd.....	9080 19-100		606	1800 06	
do 5 do	Donahue & Kennedy....	7504 81-100		607	1400 96	
	Wm McKeon.....	46007		608	9201 40	
	Robert W Casteel.....	15021 94-100		611	3004 26	
	 same.....	12773		612	2554 60	
	Samuel B Lanier.....	13722 75-100		621	2744 55	
	 same.....	8184		622	1636 80	
	Wm W Woodfolk.....	5827	874 05	624	874 05	
	Patrick Flaherty.....	20665		625	4133 ..	
do 6 do	John W Simpson.....	7553 83 100		630	1510 76	
	Terrence Farrelley.....	7437 72-100		631	1487 54	
	James Williams.....	15840		635	3168 ..	
	James Rice.....	86678		21669 50 636-7 & 8	21669 50	
	James Harkleroad.....	16650		639	3330 ..	
	W D Rice & Thomas Hawkins.....)	2155		640	431 ..	
	James Craighead.....	24455		645	4811 ..	
do 27 do	A E Addison.....	1315 69-100		653	263 18	
	J P Johnson.....	4356		651	871 20	
	E H Fletcher.....	14025		657	2805 ..	
	James Galispie.....	3274 78-100		658	654 95	
July 24, 1855.	R H Douglas.....	5028 84-100		667	1005 76	
	John A Craig.....	8156	1223 52	671	1223 52	
	E C Morton.....			679	1000 00	In part for Levee
		873086 69-100	24244 28-100	45577 17	21669 50	190875 43

ABSTRACT A—No. 2.

Date of Allowance.	To whom allowed.	No. of cubic yards of Levee received.	Amount of allowance for Levee at 15, 20 and 25 cents per cubic yard.			Number of certificate to the Auditor.	Total amount allowed and certified to the Auditor.	Remarks.
			at 15 cents.	at 20 cents.	at 25 cts.			
Oct'r 23, 1855..	Geo Humphrey.....	11431 .....	.....	2286 30	.....	684	2286 36	
	John A Jordan assignee) of H Cross..	11946 44-100	1791 96	.....	.....	685	1791 96	
	John B Hall	8030 53-100	.....	1606 11	.....	689	1606 11	
	Samuel Carson.....	3795 55-100	.....	759 11	.....	690	759 11	
Oct'r 24, 1855..	E C Morton.....	12289 23-100	843 37	.....	.....	696	843 37	\$100 paid heretofore. Balance on ditch and dam.
	R W Johnson.....	5537 44-100	.....	800 00	.....	697	800 00	
	Patrick O'Donahue.....	913 88-100	.....	182 70	.....	698	182 70	
	Isaac W Fuller.....	5137 80-100	.....	1027 40	.....	706	1027 40	
Oct'r 25, 1855..	Patrick O'Farrell.....	9781	480 00	1316 20	.....	707	1796 20	
Feb'y 2, 1856..	Patrick O'Donahue.....	3276 .....	.....	655 20	.....	723	655 20	
	John A Jordan.....	5041	756 15	.....	.....	724	756 15	
	Geo Humphrey.....	16666 .....	.....	3333 20	.....	735	3333 20	
	Patrick S O'Farrel.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	739	450 00	Allowance on levee.
	John W Simpson.....	3633 03-100	.....	726 60	.....	741	726 60	
Feb'y 4, 1856..	Miles Killeen.....	11674 .....	.....	334 80	.....	745	334 80	\$2000 paid heretofore.
Feb'y 5, 1856..	Thomas Channing.....	888 .....	.....	177 60	.....	755	177 60	
	E & J Williams.....	9952 28-100	.....	1990 45	.....	757	1990 45	
	John H Walker.....	3696 .....	.....	.....	924 00	758	924 00	
	A B Slavy.....	8097 14-100	.....	.....	2024 28	759	2024 28	
	same	38009 60-100	.....	.....	9502 40	760	9502 40	
	same	3080 20-100	.....	.....	770 05	761	770 05	
	same	300 .....	.....	.....	75 00	762	75 00	
	E G Sugg.....	5661 80-100	.....	1132 36	.....	764	1132 36	
	Hiram Meadows.....	4804 60-100	.....	960 92	.....	763	960 92	
	Elliott H Fletcher	5572 11-100	.....	1114 42	.....	765	1114 42	
	same	10955 02-100	.....	2191 ..	.....	766	2191 00	
	Thomas Peters.....	18156 15-100	.....	3631 20	.....	767	3631 20	
	Thomas J Blackmore....	9931 57-100	.....	1819 04	.....	768	1819 04	\$167 26 deducted.
	P G Burke.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	770	4000 00	Allowance on levee.
May 7, 1856...	Clark & Richardson.....	70346 81-100	.....	15060 53	.....	784	15060 53	
	R W Casteel	7838 98-100	1175 09	.....	.....	785	1175 09	

Sept'r 22, 1856.	E C Morton.....	22023 63-100	570 ..	8487 92	.....	786	.....	4057 92	
	Robert W Johnson.....	9804 66-100	.....	.....1060 98	.....	787	.....	1060 00	\$800 paid heretofore.
	J B Harris.....	5778 67-100	.....	.....1154 78	.....	791	.....	1154 78	
	Patrick Burke.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	788	.....	8000 00	Allowance on levee.
	Robert W Casteel.....	2180 28-100	.....	.....436 05	.....	792	.....	436 05	
	same	1828 30-100	.....	.....265 60	.....	806	.....	265 60	
	George Humphrey.....	14252 .....	.....	.....2850 40	.....	798	.....	2850 48	
	Patrick O'Dorahue.....	6078 .....	.....	.....1214 60	.....	794	.....	1214 60	
	Miles Killean	6848 40-100	750 86	869 20	.....	796	.....	1119 50	
	M Gegan	16550 83-100	.....	.....8310 36	.....	801	.....	8810 36	
	Patrick S O'Farrell.....	5001 .....	.....	.....1000 20	.....	820	.....	1000 20	
	John B Hall	4250 .....	.....	.....850 ..	.....	821	.....	850 00	
	Miles Killean	870 80-100	180 54	.....	.....	822	.....	130 54	
	George Humphrey.....	5444 .....	.....	.....1088 80	.....	823	.....	1088 80	
Sept'r 23, 1856.	same	12482 25-100	.....	.....2486 44	.....	824	.....	2486 44	
	Thomas J Blackmore.....	7165 87-100	.....	.....1433 15	.....	846	.....	1433 15	
	Elliott H Fletcher	5683 88-100	.....	.....1136 77	.....	827	.....	1136 77	
	same	12469 40-100	.....	.....2493 89	.....	828	.....	2493 89	
	Hiram Meadows.....	1569 46-100	.....	.....313 99	.....	829	.....	313 99	
	Thomas B Craighead.....	6338 87-100	.....	.....1267 67	.....	830	.....	1267 67	
Sept'r 24, 1856.	William Mayer	3200 .....	.....	.....800 00	.....	831	.....	800 00	
	Jilson P Johnson.....	13441 .....	.....	.....2688 20	.....	837	.....	2688 20	
	Charles W Campbell.....	2560	884 00	.....	.....	838	.....	884 00	
	Abel Knowlton.....	24020 94-100	.....	.....	.....	840	.....	4119 92	
	P G Burke.....	65866 .....	.....	.....1173 20	.....	848	.....	1173 20	\$12000 paid heretofore.
	Geo Humphrey.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	842	.....	750 00	Allowance on levee.
		869982 07-100	6881 37	68187 11	14095 78		.....	109488 46	
		873086 69-100	24244 28	45577 17	21669 50		.....	190875 48	
		1248068 76-100	81125 65	118764 28	85764 23		.....	800358 89	

ABSTRACT B—No 1.

Date of Allowance.	To whom allowed.	On what account allowed.					Total am't allowed & certified. \$ cts.	No. of certificate to the Auditor.	Remark2.
		No. of cubic y'ds of ditching at 20 cents per cubic yard.	Salaries of Com'rs, Eng'rs and Secretary.	Locating swamp & overflowed lands.	Services as sub-commissioner.	Conting'nt and office expenses.			
April 27, 1855..	William F. Pope, P. M....	.....	.....	.....	.....	17 80	17 80	660	
28, ...	Francis J Ditter.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	50 00	50 00	662	
	Wm F Pope, P M.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	84 60	84 60	661	
	Wm E Butts.....	.....	300	.....	.....	.....	300	664	
	same .....	.....	330	.....	.....	.....	330	668	
July 20	John R Gratiott.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	89	89	666	
	L C Morgan.....	.....	.....	70 00	.....	.....	70	665	
July 25	James M Vance.....	.....	.....	160	.....	.....	160	668	
	Wm D Ford.....	.....	.....	362	.....	.....	362	669	
	W C Hurly.....	.....	.....	.....	280	.....	230	670	
	Jacob Caudell.....	.....	.....	20	.....	.....	20	672	
	David Chandler.....	.....	.....	40	.....	.....	40	673	
	Houghton & Robinson.....	1193	.....	.....	.....	.....	238 60	674	
	Geo A Worthen.....	.....	239 19	.....	.....	.....	239 19	683	
	Daniel E Williams.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	300	300	675	
	James H Hobbs.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	300	300	676	
	James M Brown.....	.....	566	.....	.....	.....	566	678	Salary and expenses....
	Davis Thompson.....	.....	472 70	.....	.....	.....	472 70	677	
	A S Huey, Auditor.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1000 00	680	Appropriation
	J E Reardon.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	15 50	15 50	681	
	L J Reardon.....	.....	133 33	.....	.....	.....	133 33	632	
April 5	H S Hudspeth.....	910	.....	.....	.....	.....	182	619	
	Mark G Welch.....	.....	.....	.....	266	.....	266	620	
	Emanuel Sandusky.....	260	.....	.....	.....	.....	52	623	
	John McDaniel.....	.....	633 53	.....	.....	.....	633 53	649	
	Horner, Baldwin & Porter.....	1586 69-100	.....	.....	.....	.....	317 33	626	
	W E Butts.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	806 10	806 10	627	
	same .....	.....	630	.....	.....	.....	630	629	
	Robert Maloney.....	.....	.....	.....	550	.....	550	628	Sub-com'sioner and clerk
	Cleveland & Taylor.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	70	644	Printing.....
	John T Jones.....	5323 21-100	.....	.....	.....	.....	1064 64	632	

April 5, 1855...	E G Sugg, assigne of W Seay					28 84	638	Excep. paid on entry....
	H L Biscoe & J C O Smith				225	225	634	Rent
	W W Palmer					450	641	Clearing Beaver Bayou..
	John Smieser	2444 44-100				488 88	642	
	Barton W Green			78 50		78 50	646	
	Boyd Bailey		1906 68			1906 18	648	
	E L Pryor			600		600	653	
April 27....	Davis Thompson		8021 16			8021 16	654	
	Boyd Bailey		95 66			95 66	655	
	J F Hathaway		161 00			161	656	
	W R McKoy			220		220	659	
	John R Lewellyn				230	230	569	
April 8	S I Brandenburg				202	200	578	
	James B Miles	13221 13-100				2644 20	579	
	John C Duncan			164		164	584	
	Gideon J Pillow	6197 50-100				1239 65	596	
April 4	Leonidas L Johnson	5973 95-100				1194 20	597	
	Ward W Palmer	2758 68-100				551 71	598	
	R W Casteel	500				100	611	
	R Topp					2 40		Balance due.....
	James H Hazard					71 28	602	do...do
	Noah Sawyer					60 70	603	Excess paid on entry..
	W E Butts					47 50	604	do...do..... do.....
	Robert P Rankin	8838 11-100				666 62	605	
April 5	Leonidas L Johnson	8828 72-100				765 74	609	
	M Butt Hewson		886			886	610	
	Enoch H Vance					26	613	Advertising.....
	Wm P Welch	549				109 80	614	
	Wm M Ducker	1548 (15 cts)				231 78	615	
	W D Ford			380		380	616	
	Mark G Welch				80	80	617	
	Joseph D Dickson		1193 67			1193 67	648	
	Hugh Rogers	188				87 60	618	
		49,812 38-100	10,568 92	1,316 00	1,286 50	1,787 50	27,597 98	

ABSTRACT B.—No 2.

Date of Allowance.	To whom allowed.	On what account allowed.					Total am't allowed & certified.		Remarks.
		No. of cubic y'ds of ditching at 20 cents per cubic yard.	Salaries of Commissioners, Engineers and Secretary.	Locating swm'p and overflowed lands.	Services of sub-commissioners.	Conting'nt and office expenses.	\$	cts.	
October 23, 1855..	James M. Vance.....	.....	.....	180	.....	.....	180	686	
	William D Ford.....	.....	.....	180	.....	.....	180	687	
	John M O'Neill.....	.....	.....	138	.....	.....	138	688	
October 24,.....	Borland & Danley.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	68 80	68 80	694	
	Ambrose Hudgens.....	.....	.....	324	.....	.....	324	691	
	Augustus D Hardy.....	.....	.....	20	.....	.....	20	695	
	J F Crawley.....	1054 16-100	.....	.....	.....	.....	210 88	699	
	Alvin Shelby.....	116 48-100	.....	.....	.....	.....	28 28	700	
	William West.....	207 77-100	.....	.....	.....	.....	41 55	701	
	J M & J D Butler.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	60	60	692	
	Evan Harris.....	.....	.....	180	.....	.....	180	693	
	Jordan N Embree.....	802 32-100	.....	.....	.....	.....	160 46	702	
	William Shelby.....	517 27-100	.....	.....	.....	.....	103 05	703	
	E M Vance.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	58	58	704	
	J B Arendale.....	.....	.....	172 80	.....	.....	172 80	705	
	George W Hardy.....	.....	.....	337	.....	.....	337	708	
October 25.....	W R McKoy.....	.....	.....	110	.....	.....	110	709	
October 26.....	G W Hughs.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1117 34	1217 34	710	Expenses, engineeri'g
	same.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	800	800	712	do do.....
	D Dickson.....	.....	733 82	.....	.....	74 50	807 82	711	Part expen. engineer.
	John E Reardon.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	52 46	52 45	713	
	same.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	16 74	16 74	714	
	Huey & Powers.....	.....	.....	1100	.....	.....	1100	715	
	H A Powers.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	22	22	.....	
	Davis Thompson.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	600	716	Expenses engineeri'g
	same.....	.....	500	.....	.....	600	500	717	
	John R Smoot.....	.....	.....	282	.....	.....	281	719	
February 2, 1856..	J B Arendale.....	.....	.....	191 50	.....	.....	191 50	720	
	Simson Williams.....	.....	.....	250	.....	.....	350	711	
	Robert J Black.....	.....	.....	270	.....	.....	270	722	
	H P Ross.....	.....	.....	60	.....	.....	60	725	

February 2, 1856.	Jacob Caudill.....		60		60	726
	John M Oneill.....		230		230	727
	L C Morgan.....		405		405	728
	Wm D Ford.....		240		240	729
	Jacob H Cowger.....		354		354	730
	John R Gratiott.....		200		200	731
	D R Jenkins.....		114		114	732
	B M Davis.....		99		99	733
	A D Hardy.....		40		40	734
	A Hudgens.....		233	75	233 75	736
	Israel M Moore.....		160		160	737
	John C Hill.....		414	25	414 25	738
	B F Atkinson.....		107	50	107 50	740
	Isaac C Mills.....		18		18	742
	Jacob Caudell.....		40		40	743
	D Dickson.....	544		159	703 70	744
	E M Daniel.....		160		160	745
	G W Hardy.....		456		456	747
	W J Rogers.....		62		62	747
	D E Williams.....			60	60	748
	J H Hobbs.....			40	40	749
	Huey and Powers.....		680		680	750
	H A Powers.....			130	42 130 42	751
	G W Hughs.....	1442 95		465	98 1908 95	752
	H A Powers.....	800			800	753
	D Dickson.....			500	500	754
	Davis Thompson.....	500			500	756
	same.....			739	739	769
	Miles Killeen.....			90	90	771
	Johnson and Yerkes.....			79	79	772
	John R Smoot.....		119		119	775
May 5.....	A C Steele.....		490		490	774
	Samuel Gray.....		80		80	779
	J S Dollarhide.....		250		250	778
	A B Williams.....		606		606	777
	John R Gratiott.....		206		206	776
May 6.....	Eli Eaton.....		312		312	773
	J R Allen.....		150		150	780
	Geo W Hardy.....		228		228	781
	William D Ford.....		180		180	782
	L C Morgan.....		108		108	783

ABSTRACT B—No. 2—Continued.

Date of Allowance.	To whom allowed.	On what account allowed.					Total am't allowed & certified.		No. certified to Auditor.	Remarks.
		No. of cubic y'ds of ditching at 20 cents per cubic yard.	Salaries of Commissioners, Engineers and Secretary.	Locating sw'mp and overflowed lands.	Services of sub-commissioners.	Conting'nt and office expenses.	\$	cts.		
May 7, 1856.....	Davis Thompson.....	.....	.....500	.....	.....	.....996	..	1496	790	
	W R McKoy.....	.....	.....	.....136	.....	.....	....	136	785	
	H A Powers.....	.....	.....400	.....	.....	.....	....	400	798	
	James H Crow.....	.....	.....	.....567 25	.....	.....	....	567 25	807	
	John F. Hanks.....	.....	.....	.....	....132	.....	....	132	802	
	D Dickson.....	.....	.....500	.....	.....	.....	....	500	884	
	Charles W Campbell.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	....	8 41	803	
September 22....	Geo W Hughs.....	.....	.....500	.....	.....	....326 60	....	826 60	806	Balance due.....
	John R Gratiott.....	.....	.....	.....274	.....	.....	....	274	808	
	John R Smoot.....	.....	.....	.....101	.....	.....	....	101	809	
	B M Davis.....	.....	.....	.....47 50	.....	.....	....	47 50	810	
	J W Miller.....	.....	.....	.....120	.....	.....	....	120	811	
	B J Wiley.....	.....	.....	.....132	.....	.....	....	132	812	
	M H West.....	.....	.....	.....186	.....	.....	....	186	813	
	John F King.....	.....	.....	.....395 60	.....	.....	....	395 60	814	
	J B Arendale.....	.....	.....	.....206	.....	.....	....	206	815	
	Washington Douglas.....	.....	.....	.....146	.....	.....	....	146	816	
	James H Crow.....	.....	.....	.....73 75	.....	.....	....	73 75	817	
	G Whittington.....	.....	.....	.....100	.....	.....	....	100	818	
	Jacob Caudill.....	.....	.....	.....20	.....	.....	....	20	819	
	A Hudgens.....	.....	.....	.....50 50	.....	.....	....	50 50	825	
September 23....	J F Hanks.....	.....	.....	.....	....200	.....	....	200	833	
	G W Hughs.....	.....	.....765 30	.....	.....	....134 90	....	900 20	834	
	H A Powers.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	....30	....	30	835	
	D Dickson.....	.....	.....772 32	.....	.....	....232 16	..	1059 48	836	
	Davis Thompson.....	.....	.....833	.....	.....	....610 50	..	1443 50	843	
	J B Jamison.....	.....	.....	.....570	.....	.....	....	570	844	
	H A Powers.....	.....	.....800	.....	.....	.....	....	300	845	
	G W Hughs.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	....300	....	300	846	
	J M Murphy.....	.....	.....	.....1086	.....	.....	..	1036	847	

G W Hardy.....	.....	.....184	.....	.....	.....184 00	841
H A Powers	680	.....	.....	.....	.....680 00	848
Huey & Powers.....	.....	.....124	.....	.....	.....124 00	849
D Dickson.....	.....	.....	.....300 00	.....	.....300 00	850
J M Murphy.....	.....	.....45	.....	.....	.....45 00	851
L L Johnson	...8864 95-100	.....	.....	.....	.....579 74	882
Total.....	...6562 90-100	9770 87	15193 90	832 00	...8213 60	..84610 69
do abstract No. 1—1855..	..49812 88-100	10568 92	1316	...1286 50	...1787 50	..27597 98
	...56375 28-100	20839 79	16509 90	...1618 50	..10001 10	..62208 62

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SWAMP LAND COMMISSIONERS, }
Little Rock, 24th September, 1856. }

I hereby certify that abstracts "A" and "B," herewith made a part of the report of the Board of the Swamp Land Commissioners, have been carefully compiled from the records and files of this office.

HENRY A. POWERS, *Secretary.*

REPORT

OF THE SURVEY OF THE STATE LEVEE IN DESHA AND CHICOT
COUNTIES, ARKANSAS, BY GEO. W. HUGHES, SWAMP LAND
ENGINEER.

OFFICE OF SWAMP LAND ENGINEER,
Little Rock, Ark., 5th May, 1855.

Board of Swamp Land Commissioners:

GENTLEMEN—I have the honor to submit the following report of the survey of the State levee on the Arkansas and Mississippi rivers, in the counties of Desha and Chicot, which was made in accordance with your instructions.

I present, with this report, a large topographical map of the rivers and adjacent country, on a scale of one foot to the township, on which is laid down the route of the levee, and the gaps which it is necessary to close in order to complete the line of levee on those rivers in that district; and also a profile, showing the height of the levee in comparison with the high water line, and the depth of overflow where there is no levee. This profile is on a scale of 16 rods to an inch horizontal, and 6 feet to an inch vertical.

Having organized a party, I reached the point where the levee crosses the line between Arkansas and Desha counties, on the 25th of October, 1855, at which time and place I commenced the survey and proceeded down the Arkansas river.

By reference to the accompanying map, you will see the course of the completed levee, and the route which I have surveyed where none has ever been constructed. The deep red line denotes the finished levee, and the double lines represent the gaps. It winds along down the river, as represented, hugging it very closely in Brock's Bend, above Jefferson Lake. The isthmus between this lake and the river is just fifty-seven yards

wide; about mid-way along which the levee passes. It is gradually becoming more narrow, and in a few years it will probably all fall into the river; thus establishing a connection between the lake and river which cannot be cut off, and rendering useless all the work built on the river between this point and the outlet of the lake. To prevent this, however, a contract, to make a cut-off, which will convert Bock's Bend into a lake, was let out, a deep and wide ditch was dug across; but so far the river has refused to change its channel. If this cut-off is not effected, the river will certainly cave into Jefferson Lake.

From this point to Napoleon there is but little levee, and in some places the bank is low, and the country back subject to inundation by an ordinary overflow. Especially is this the case about three miles above the mouth of the river, at a place termed "Roaring Water." At this point, during a flood, the water flows from the Arkansas into the Mississippi and Cypress creek, with a strong current, since it reaches the same level by a much nearer route. Filling this gap, would greatly assist in reclaiming a very extensive district of fine land, which is now subject to annual overflows.

The levee on the Arkansas river is not well located, being placed generally too near caving banks; and, except in very few places, it does not comply with your ordinance in relation to the dimensions which were thought necessary to give it strength sufficient to withstand the pressure of the water at the time when at its greatest height.

It is deemed, by some, that the required size is too great; but, as no experiments have ever been made testing the strength of different sizes and materials, and located at various distances from the river, it would be impossible to state what would be a combination of economy and strength.

There is no levee on the north bank except a short piece opposite Belleville.

The distance from the point of commencement to the mouth of the river, by the surveyed route, is thirty-four miles, of which there are twenty-two and a half of completed levee, and eleven and a half of gaps. The estimated cost of filling these gaps, at the maximum prices paid for leveeing, and no contract can be let at any other, is \$24,577.

From the mouth of the Arkansas river, we proceeded down the Mississippi. The levee ceases one mile and a half below Napoleon, after reaching to within 990 feet of the levee on the

Arkansas, two miles and a half above that place. Leaving the lower end of the levee, we marked out the route around Ozark bend, across Cork's point, and around Cypress bend, crossing Cypress bayou and Cypress creek, and passing on until we reached the upper end of the State levee, on the line between Desha and Chicot counties, a short distance below the mouth of the creek.

In presenting this route to you, a few words in regard to the advantages resulting from closing this gap, and building dams across the bayou and creek, might not be out of place. It will require but a small amount of labor to enlarge the communication that already exists between the creek and bayou, so that when the latter is levied its water will pass by the way of this channel into the former; which being levied also, the waters of both the bayou and creek will pass through Opossum fork and the old channel of the creek into Boggy bayou lake, and thence into Bayou Mason. Thus all communication between the river and creek would be cut off, and the overflow prevented from passing to the back country through the channel of the creek.

There is no doubt that this work can be done, since the survey proves that there is sufficient fall from the creek to Boggy lake to draw off all the rain water that may find its way into the bayou and creek. Indeed, there was once no connection between Cypress creek and the Mississippi. Bayou Red Fork put out of the Arkansas river, at Belleville, and emptied into the Mississippi in Cypress band. Cypress creek ran nearly parallel with it, and approached within a few yards of it near the corner of Ts. 10 and 11 S., Rs. 1 and 2 W., then turning sharply to the southwest joined with Amos bayou, and emptied into Boggy lake. In time a channel was worn across the narrow neck of land separating them; and the creek finding a lower level in a shorter distance forsook its own channel and adopted that of Red Fork, emptying into the Mississippi, where it now does, by the bed of Red Fork bayou. Then, if Cypress creek once ran into Boggy lake and Bayou Mason, it can be made to do so again. The most eligible point for a dam, to turn the creek, is on the cut-off between it and Red Fork.

By referring to the map, you will be able to comprehend this plan without any further explanation. It is all important that this work should be done, since, during the annual overflows, the water of the Mississippi, running out of Ozark and Cypress bends, floods a great portion of those ranges of townships num-

bered 1 and 2 west, from the 5th principal meridian, from those bends to Louisiana, and probably on to the Ouachita river. If the line of levee is not completed, it will benefit none but the land fronting the river.

—Passing on down, with the exception of one mile, on which there is a private levee, we have a continuous State levee to Yellow bend, where there is a gap of three and a half miles. To close this, the interested citizens had succeeded in getting a man to undertake it, who, after having nearly finished the work, abandoned it, without receiving but a small allowance for the same. The front, along this bend, is also low, and it is very important that the remainder should be completed.

From this point to the State line, there are but two short openings, and they are filled by private levees; their length and location you will see exhibited on the map. Though there are near twenty-one miles of river bank, which has heretofore been considered sufficiently above overflow as not to require levying, but which, since the confinement of the river to the channel by embankments on both sides, will scarcely be above water should there come a flood like that in the spring and summer of 1844.

Finding a map, in the swamp land office, delineating the levee on the Mississippi, above the mouth of White river, in Desha county, it was not considered necessary to survey it; but reaching the boundary line between Arkansas and Louisiana on the 17th December, 1855, the party was immediately disbanded.

The distance by the survey, from the mouth of the Arkansas to the boundary line, is 97 1-10 miles, of which there are 54 $\frac{1}{4}$ of completed levee, 21 of high bank, and 21 6-10 which require levying. The estimated cost of completing the work along the banks which are subject to overflow, is \$95,136 00. The same could be done for near one-half this amount in cash.

I found the levee more judiciously located on this river than on the Arkansas, though its original height and size are, in some places, much diminished by heavy rains, the tramping of live stock, and from having settled—so much so that but little of it, as you will discover from the profile, is now of proper height. Indeed, a great deal of it never was so. It would be well if some means were devised by which all the levees could be kept in repair, since so much is at stake upon their capability of shielding our best lands from inundation, which always comes in that season of the year when it can do the most injury, and when the planters have less time to ward against it.

For the fall of the rivers, the top of the levee composed with the line of highest water which was observed and noted in 1844, and the height to which the levee must be built in the gaps, you are referred to the profile. I may here remark that the line of high water, laid down, is not taken from the flood rings on the trees at a distance from the river, which, except across some points, is always lower than on the river bank, and I regretted to perceive that they had been the guides in the erection of much of the levee I have examined. I could not but observe the evil of not requiring the contractors to build their work sufficiently above the desired height as to counterbalance the "settling" or shrinkage. In some large levees this is so much as to leave them but a few inches above high water mark, where they have settled; though they may have been, when new, full $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet above. This could be removed by adding the probable shrinkage to the required height of a levee, in giving to the contractors the notes by which they are governed in the erection of their work. The quantity to be thus added should, of course, vary with the quality of soil.

To the profile, your especial attention is invited, since, except the courses of the survey, it embodies all the information which was desired when the survey was ordered to be made.

I am, gentlemen, respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

G. W. HUGHES,

Swamp Land Engineer.

DANIEL E. WILLIAMS,

JAS. M. BROWN and

JAS. H. HOBBS,

Swamp Land Commissioners.

REPORT
OF
D. DICKSON,
Swamp Land Engineer.

To the Honorable Board of Swamp Land Commissioners :

GENTLEMEN—I have the honor of submitting for your consideration, my report of operation as one of the Swamp Land Engineers of the State of Arkansas.

Having been appointed engineer by James M. Brown, one of the Swamp Land Commissioners, and being duly obligated in June, 1855, I immediately entered upon the discharge of my duty. Being informed that my field of operation would embrace the counties of Crawford, Sebastian, Franklin, Johnson, Yell, Pope, Perry, Conway, Searcy, Van Buren, White, Independence, Prairie, Saline, Hot Spring, Pulaski, Jefferson and Arkansas, I proceeded according to instructions to examine and report certain levees and ditches which were under contract, in the counties of Pulaski, Jefferson and Arkansas, and reported to the Board at the October term. There is now on the north side of the Arkansas river, in the three counties alluded to, twenty and one-half miles of levee work completed and paid for, and on the south side of the river, there is about fifty miles of levee work completed.

I herewith submit for your examination, a map marked A, of that part of the Arkansas river lying between Little Rock and the line of Desha county, with levee work laid down as finished, also some of the ditches.

The most important part of the levee on the south side of the river, in these three counties. is finished or under contract.

Upon examination of old levees, on this side of the river, I find that many of them are now below the standard, some places as low, and some lower than high water mark, and, in many places they have been made too near the river; consequently,

in some of the bends they have gone into the river, and will require rebuilding. The most important cave in the levee, is below Mr. Brent's ferry, in a caving bend of the river, where there is a mile of levee which will go in soon, as the banks of the river are caving rapidly. The levees on the north side of the river, as you will see on the map, have been finished in detached pieces, and some of them would be of little use in time of an overflow, unless they are connected.

In the eighteen (18) counties in which my duty is assigned, there has been no work done by the State, except in the three counties alluded to.

The decision of former commissioners and engineers was, that no levees could be built of any extent on the river above Little Rock, on account of the hills coming too close to the river, in which I fully concur: but in all these counties there is some swamp land, consequently, there can be large bodies of land reclaimed by ditching. I have not explored all the district assigned me, but according to instructions, I have, to some extent, examined that part of the country lying east of the Arkansas river, in Pulaski, Prairie and Jefferson counties, on the head waters of Plum Bayou, Wateseca, and Little Bayou Metre, and find an immense body of good land lying low and subject to overflow from the Arkansas river, at a high stage of water. It is my opinion that this part of the country claims your immediate attention. Upon examination of map marked A, you will find that the overflow from the Arkansas river runs into the head waters of Plum Bayou, and from the backing up of the water from the mill-dam of Messrs. Mason & Broadie, a large body of good land is kept from reclamation. The water in this mill-pond is backed up about 25 miles, by the course of the bayou, and at a common rise of water in the spring season, the water from the mill pond overflows a flat outlet, by some called Flat Bayou, thence into Wateseca and Little Bayou Metre.

Mr. Hallaburton is the owner of a saw-mill on Little Bayou Metre. That gentleman informs me himself, that the water in his mill pond is raised back 25 miles, and that forty or fifty thousand acres of land is affected by it; the water being kept up in these mill ponds, prevents to some extent, the communication from one side of the bayous to another; and if all the obstructions were removed from those bayous, from my own knowledge of the country, and other reliable information, there can be an immense amount of land reclaimed, by ditching into those ba-

yous, and open into market a large amount of swamp land, which otherwise would remain unsettled for many years; and and when the levees are completed on the north side of the river, from the first overflow below Little Rock to Pine Bluff, this will secure from overflow one of the finest districts of country in the State.

Owing to the depreciation of swamp land scrip, there has not been many contracts let out in this district for the past year; but, at this time, there appears to be a willingness on the part of contractors to extend their operations, and close up such openings as are necessary.

All of which I submit for your consideration.

D. DICKSON,
Swamp Land Engineer.

Little Rock, September 24, 1856.

REPORT OF DAVIS THOMPSON,
SWAMP LAND ENGINEER.

To the Honorable the Board of Swamp Land

Commissioners for the State of Arkansas:

GENTLEMEN—I beg leave to submit for your consideration a report of my official acts as engineer of the eastern district, together with a statement touching the present condition of the levees already completed, and gaps remaining unfinished. Though laboring under serious difficulties, growing out of bad management on the part of my predecessor in office, I have been enabled, with kind assistance of citizens on the route, to distinguish the parts of levee work unpaid for, and to furnish notes necessary to repair insufficient sections. It is but right that I should state here, the fact, that in many places the levee was found to be deficient, both in height and base, and occasionally filled with logs and rubbish of various kinds, rendering the same almost worthless for purposes of protection. I have superintended the repairing of such work, as far as the same could be put under contract, at the depreciated value of scrip; and I am pleased to say, that in all cases where these additions and repairs have been made, the levees have since withstood the highest overflow of the Mississippi, without damage. In making instrumental surveys of gaps and work not under contract, and reporting upon the same, I have found it necessary to recommend in some instances, an additional allowance, somewhat above the usual rates, especially on contracts to be taken across deep marshy bayous, or low swamp, in no instances however have my recommendations exceeded ten cents per cubic yard more than the ordinary rates.

In regard to the present condition of the general line of levee on the Mississippi, as far as completed, I feel warranted in saying that it is good and secure, with an exception, perhaps, in Walnut bend, about four miles below Hopefield, and two in Mississippi county, amounting in all to about ten miles of levee, which will require additional earth. There are gaps yet unfinished, amounting in all to about twenty miles in the eastern district, which I represent, and which I find upon examination, to be not only an absolute damage to the work already constructed,

owing to the liability of the present levee to be washed at the ends, by the exceeding rapid currents of the water, rushing, as it does, to the lowlands in the rear ; also in washing deep cuts, and thus rendering the surface uneven and unfit for cultivation ; besides, the present system of levee above the mouth of the St. Francis river, forms an entire connection, and a gap at any intermediate point would inundate the whole country, by collecting in the rear of the levee built. I deem it especially advisable to suggest to your honorable board, the extreme necessity therefore of encouraging to the fullest, the early completion of this portion of unfinished work. As to the system of drainage by ditches, heretofore adopted, sanctioned and carried out for the purpose of relieving low, level and swampy lands of water, I have but little to say, as nothing has been done in that department worth noticing, under the present board. I think it expedient, however, to state that the greater part of such work done heretofore, has been secured and executed with motives of selfish design, and intended for the express purpose of draining individual lands, without regard to the quantity of swamp lands reclaimed.

I know of nothing more, gentlemen, that I could add at present, which would throw any additional light upon swamp land and levying interest in my district—suffice it to say that I contemplate a minute survey of the entire district at an early date, for the purpose of furnishing a map of the eastern district, a diagram of the levee route, with profiles, &c., &c.

I have the honor, gentlemen, to be

Very respectfully, your ob't serv't,

DAVIS THOMPSON, S. L. E.

Eastern District.

Little Rock, 24th September, 1856.